

Georgia Grazing Lands Conservation Coalition



2003

**The grass is
always greener...**



*Providing a
unified voice
to support
grazing land
management*

The GGLCC sponsors:

The Georgia Statewide Forage Conference (1998, 2000, 2002...)

The GGLCC Demonstration Cost-share Project (1999, 2001, 2003...)

January 2003

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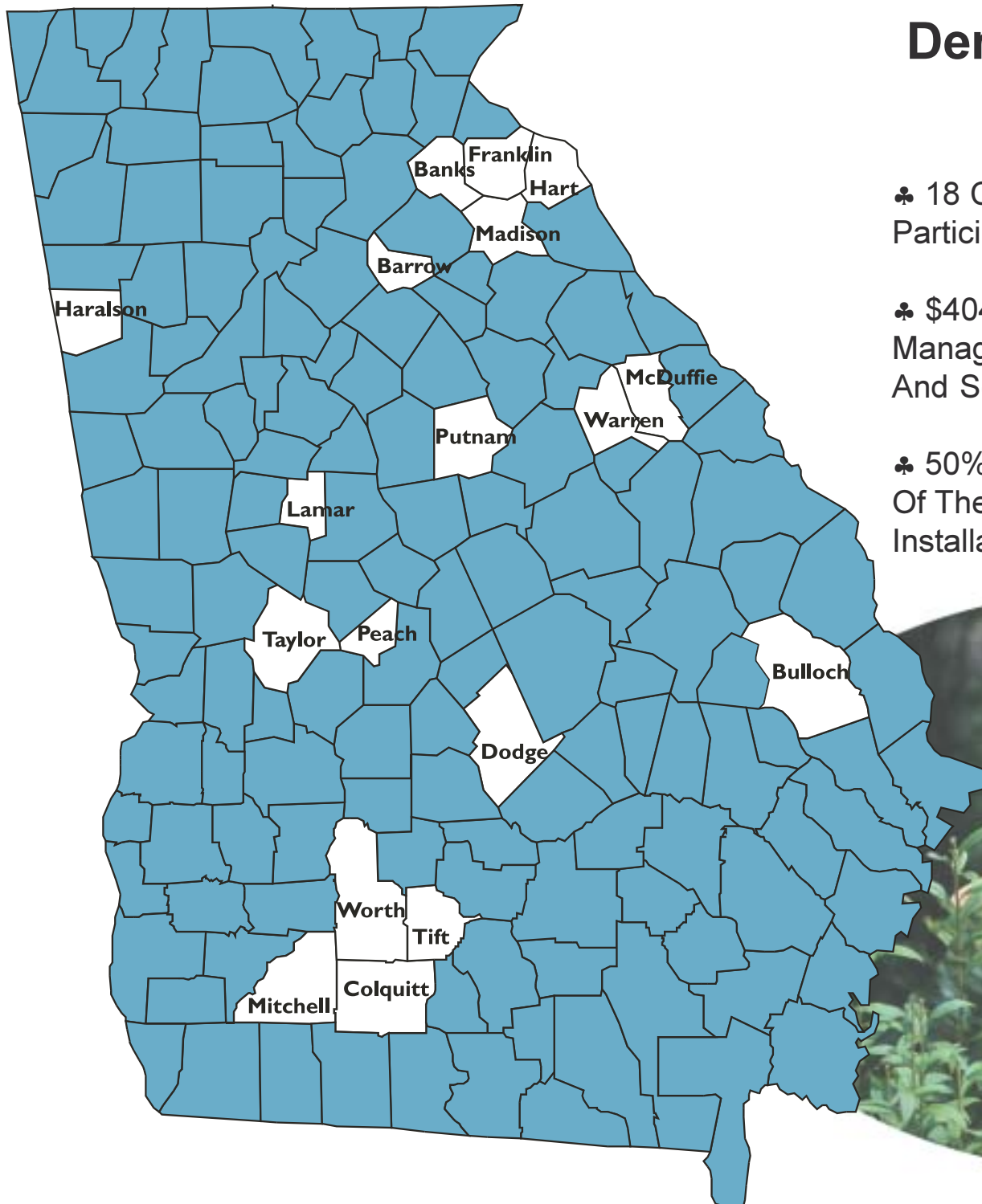
Demonstration Facts

2001 Project Year

♣ 18 Counties Represented By 22 Participating Producers

♣ \$404,000 Of Livestock And Grazing Management Improvements Planned And Scheduled

♣ 50% Of Funds Reimbursed Only 1/4 Of The Way Into The Allowed Practice Installation Period



February 2003

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2003 Demonstration Cost-share Project Timeline

**April 1 – Applications
available from the
GGLCC website, and
county NRCS &
Extension offices**

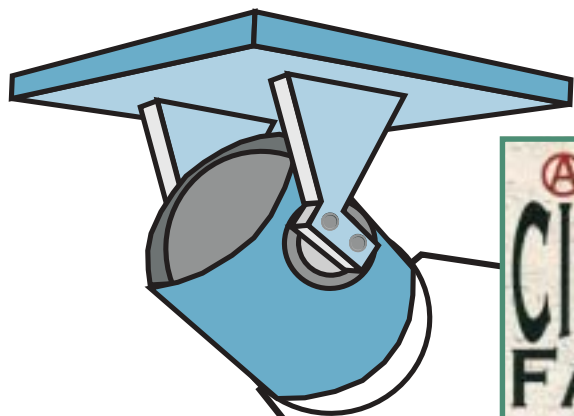
**June 1 – Application
deadline**

**August 1 – Participants
selected & notified**

**August 2003 through
December 2005 –
Practice planning and
application**

March 2003

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Participant: Tom Aiken
Location: Lamar County
NRCS Conservationist: Carmen Westerfield
Extension Agent: Keith Lassiter



“My original livestock handling facility was built out of wood in 1982 and had been repaired many times,” remarks Tom Aiken, owner-operator of Circle A Farms. “I was injured by a steer in October 2001, primarily due to the poor design and disrepair of this facility. I realized that I either needed to completely rebuild or get out of the cattle business entirely.”

With what Aiken considers consistently professional, reliable, and valuable technical assistance from NRCS and Extension, he submitted site specific measurements and a proposed working facility design to the equipment supplier of his choice. The equipment supplier generated detailed computer drawings of the proposed facility and then provided on-site expertise to fit their proposed design to the actual site.



In addition to the livestock working facility, Aiken added cross fencing to increase the grazing efficiency of his small acreage, and he excluded livestock from a creek to protect water quality.

April 2003

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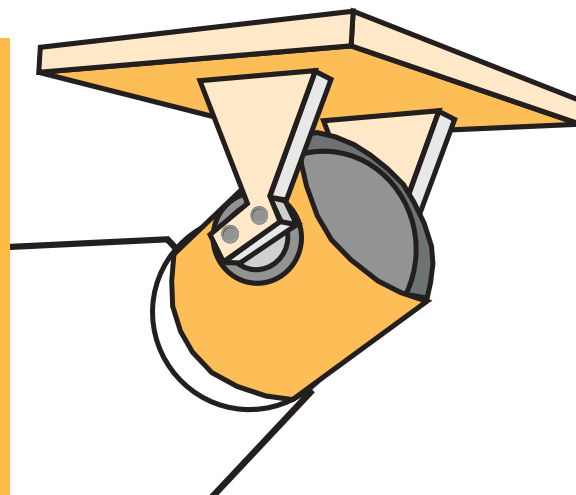


“The key to the program is improved management of existing resources, not just installing a bunch of practices on the land.”

According to Terry Chandler, Madison County livestock, forage and poultry producer, “the project application process helped us plan a logical progression for getting projects and practices completed and in operation.” Chandler requested and received assistance from the GGLCC to treat three specific problem areas he identified in his operation. The problems Chandler identified are common to many Georgia operations.



Chandler constructed a hay barn to improve hay storage conditions and increase profitability, while decreasing farm labor and inputs. With fencing, pipeline, and water troughs, he set up a paddock system for managed rotational grazing to improve forage utilization and maintain quality stands of grass. To round out his project, Chandler protected high traffic areas with geotextile and gravel to prevent miring and soil erosion.



Photos: Carol Boss & Holli Kuykendall

Participant: Terry Chandler
Location: Madison County
NRCS Conservationists: Carol Boss & Glenn Head
Extension Agent: Carl Varnadoe

“As a result of the rotational grazing system and smaller more manageable grazing units, we have already noticed considerably better forage utilization, increased acreage available for hay production, and better fertility management. And particularly with the hot and dry summer, the rotational stocking system allowed pasture recovery times when not in use,” remarks Chandler.

May 2003

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Participant: Bobby Miller
Location: Banks County
NRCS Conservationists: Buddy Belflower & Howard Cooper
Extension Agent: Gene Anderson



According to Bobby Miller, Banks County cattle producer, “putting [my farm goals and application narrative] on paper helped me to prioritize what I needed to do most.”

“I use my pastures intensively to try to support high enough cattle numbers to be profitable. Silver Creek runs through my farm and is a pretty stream with many rock outcrops and shoals. The use of temporary fence to divide my pastures for rotational grazing and to separate different groups of cattle was not working as well as I would have liked. Because of the location of my stream and woodland, fencing out the stream not only helped to protect the stream it helped to divide my farm with permanent fencing which is a tremendous help for rotational grazing, wildlife habitat management, and separation of different cattle groups,” remarks Miller.

Miller continues, “working with Howard Cooper, I developed an alternative watering system using watering troughs and two stream crossings, and a fencing layout that helps me protect my stream, work my cattle and pastures better, and helped me to set aside some wildlife areas.”

June 2003

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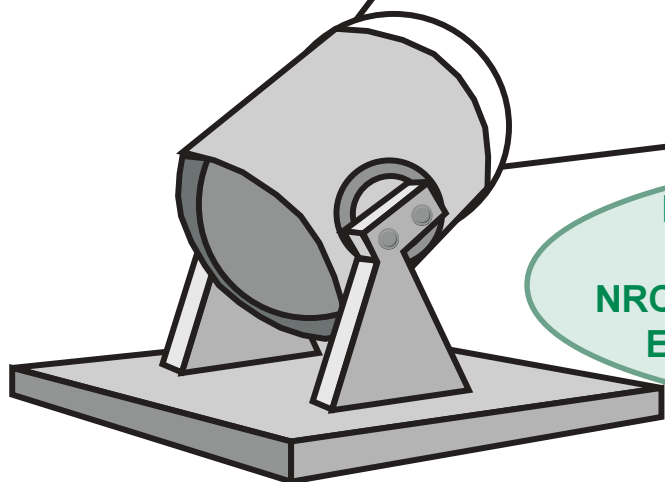


“Our neighbors never complain now of muddy water coming down the creek onto their land. [The GGLCC] has definitely assisted us in our long-term plan for being a successful quality supplier of high-grade feeder cattle,” states Rapp.

“Our hay loss was under 2% last year!” exclaims Bill Rapp. He comments that his operation is much easier and cleaner as a result of installing two heavy use protection areas for winter feeding, laying geotextile and stone for the main livestock watering areas, and developing a heavy use area protection watering ramp into a pond that is otherwise excluded from livestock use. “Herd health has improved, our hay requirements are reduced by 15 to 20%, and fish and wildlife are abundant now,” states Rapp.

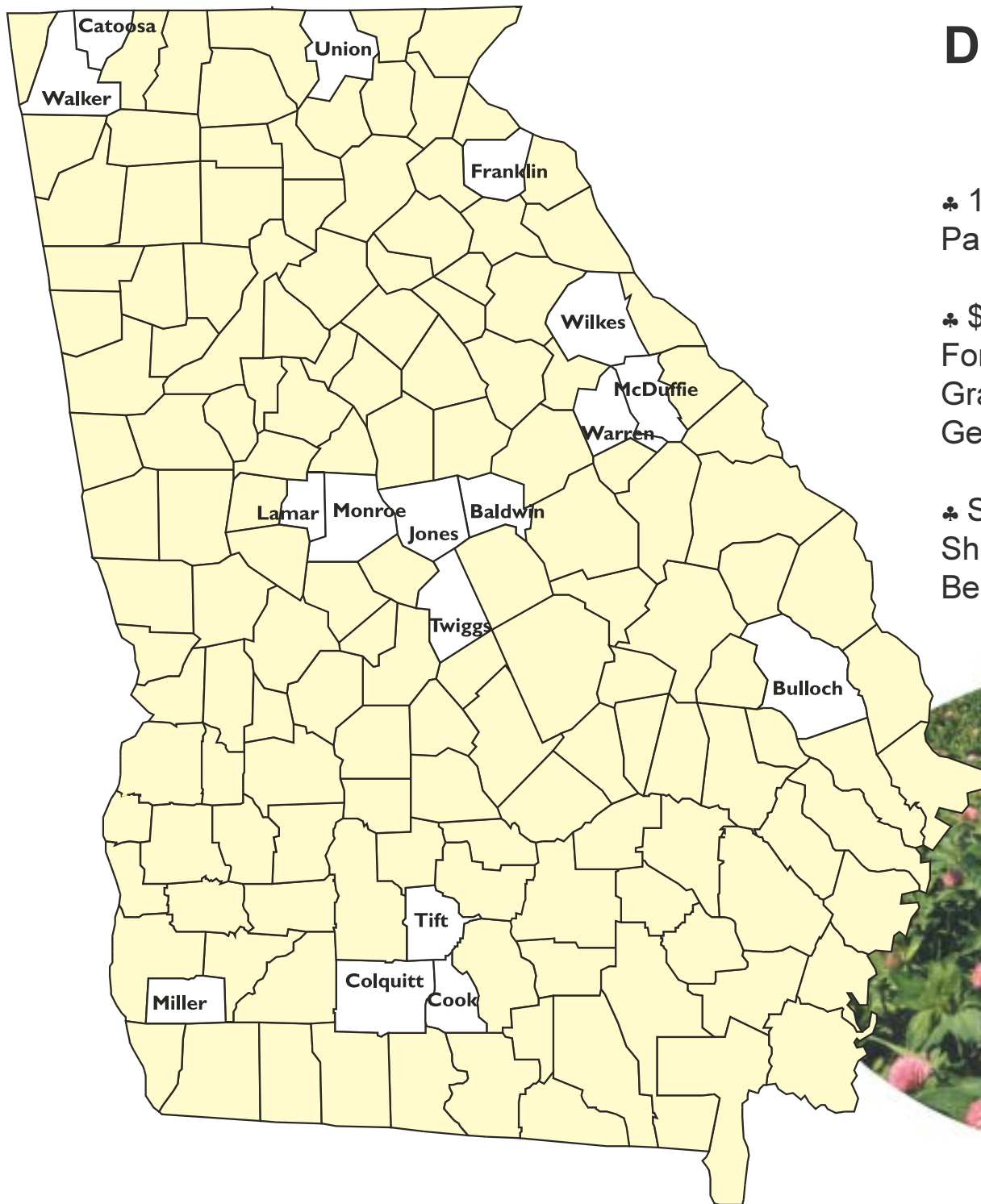


**Participant: W. H. (Bill) Rapp
Location: Haralson County
NRCS Conservationist: Sam Sharpe
Extension Agent: Billy Skaggs**



July 2003

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Demonstration Facts

1999 Project Year

♣ 17 Counties Represented By 20 Participating Producers

♣ \$178,000 Matched By The GGLCC For \$356,000 Worth Of Livestock And Grazing Related Practices Applied To Georgia Farms

♣ Seven Field Days And Tours Showcasing Demonstration Practices Benefitted 250 Local Cattlemen



August 2003

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"The cost-share application process made me think about management goals for the farm. It forced me to think about where we were and where we wanted to be down the road," remarks Betts Berry, producer in Walker and Catoosa Counties.

Berry used GGLCC cost-share assistance to erect a steel building for hay storage. She notes a significant reduction in wasted hay due to weathering and feeding losses. Berry uses a hay spinner (unroller) at feeding time. According to Berry, "unrolling the hay helps to reseed the pastures, the herd cleans up more of the bale than when it is not unrolled, and more of the herd has access to the hay at one time instead of the more aggressive animals getting first choice."

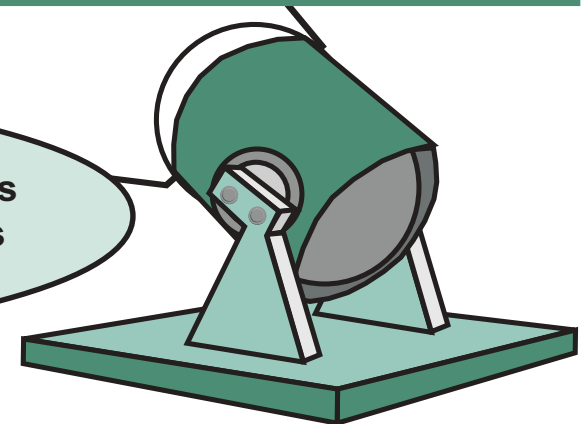
Berry also used cost-share assistance to install a cross fence that allows for a better rotational grazing system and improved forage utilization. "The forage is utilized more efficiently in the cross fenced pasture than it was before," notes Berry.

When asked how the cost-share practices have changed her approach to management, Berry replied, "my 'approach' to management has not changed, but the cost-shared practices have enabled me to improve that level of management on more of the farm."

Photos: Betts Berry & Karen Bradley



Participant: Betts Berry
Location: Walker & Catoosa Counties
NRCS Conservationist: Sheri Teems
Extension Agent: Mike Bunn



September 2003

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“At the time of [the GGLCC] application, I knew what I wanted to do,” remarks Robert Harkins, Union County beef cattle producer. “I wanted to address my water quality and my forage quality concerns.”

“My cows were constantly crossing and standing in the water in open drainage ditches that cut across one of my pastures. The open ditches drained into Suches Creek, a primary trout stream. By replacing the open ditches with a tile drainage system, we eliminated a source of erosion and improved water quality,” remarks Harkins.

“With all of the talk about fescue toxicity, and the introduction of MaxQ tall fescue, I figured this was a good time to plant MaxQ in the 18-acre field where the open ditches were. The grading that was needed to fix the ditches made it a perfect time to kill the existing fescue and replant with MaxQ,” states Harkins. Harkins quickly noticed improvements in animal appearance and performance as a result of grazing MaxQ.

Harkins continues, “the 500 foot stock trail that served as my main trail for moving cattle and hay from the barn to the field was washing and full of gullies. By grading the road and putting in a couple of water bars the geotextile heavy use area has given me an excellent, stable surface for my cattle and equipment.”

Participant: Robert Harkins
Location: Union County
NRCS Conservationist: Doug Towery
Extension Agent: Mickey Cummings



October 2003

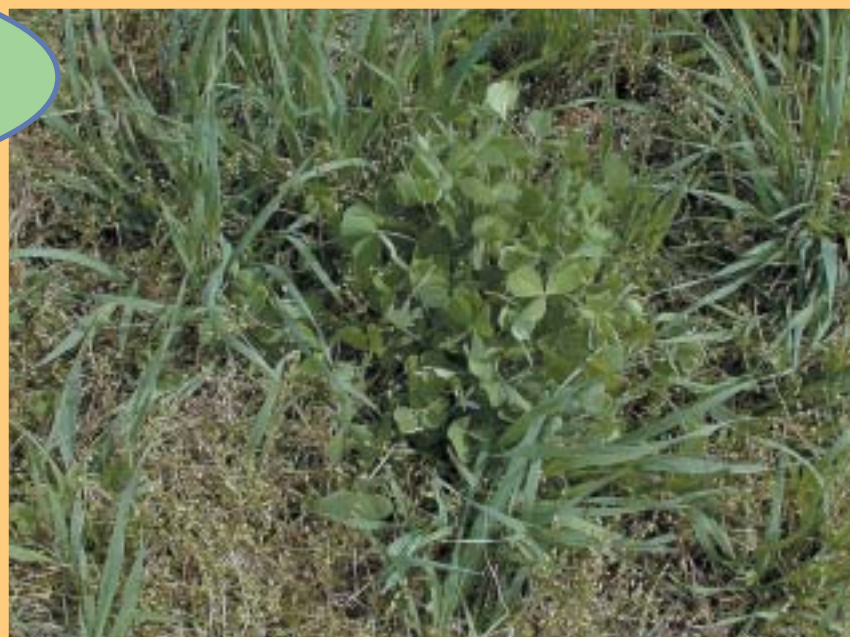
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Tift county producer James Walker remarks, "the application process caused me to take a look at my total operation, both positive and negative. I pretty well knew what my needs were, but writing the narrative helped prioritize the needs and helped me begin to explore ways to accomplish the goals set forth."

Participation in the GGLCC project helped Walker change his management in three principal ways. Fencing now keeps his cattle out of swampy bottom land. This protects water quality and makes management easier as the cattle can no longer calve or range in this area. 'Tift 9' bahiagrass and 'Tifton 85' bermudagrass were planted to increase forage production, and clover is being used to increase nitrogen efficiency and forage quality. A bull pen was constructed to facilitate a controlled breeding season. According to Walker, "with better facilities, a controlled breeding season caused calves to be born in a shorter span of time, therefore I can sell a truck load at one time. This gives a broader market such as video sales."



Participant: James Walker
Location: Tift County
NRCS Conservationist: Mary Leidner
Extension Agent: Brian Tankersley



November 2003

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December 2003

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Photos: Mary Leidner, Carmen Westerfield, & Buddy
Belflower

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Athens, GA

December, 2002

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